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ABSTRACT

The statistical information compiled in this report indicates the extent, frequency, and financial costs incurred as a result of vandalism in the public schools of suburban Cook County, Illinois. Data presented were gathered from a survey instrument developed and disseminated by the Educational Service Region of Cook County to 143 school districts. Survey findings indicate a sharp decline in vandalism costs during the last five years. Successful prevention programs developed by school districts are credited with contributing to this decline. Some of these programs are briefly described. (MK)

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ED199304

RESEARCH REPORT

1978-79

VANDALISM SURVEY AND REPORT

SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

#3217

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VANDALISM SURVEY AND REPORT
SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1978-79

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The statistical information compiled in this report indicates the extent, frequency and financial costs incurred as a result of vandalism in the public schools of suburban Cook County. Successful prevention programs developed by many suburban school districts are also outlined.

SOURCE OF DATA

The data was compiled from a survey instrument developed by and disseminated from the Educational Service Region of Cook County to all one hundred forty-three (143) suburban school districts. (see Appendix A)

LIMITATION OF DATA

Only seventy-two percent of those school districts polled returned a completed survey. (approximately 80% in the South, Southwest, and West areas and 53% in the North) This factor should be considered in making comparisons.

Additional information, which may not be reflected in the approximate costs of vandalism to the school districts, are the "hidden costs". These include: repairs by schools completed by maintenance and janitorial staff, not by outside firms; damage costs that have not been reported by school officials; and costs to teaching and learning in time lost because of damaged equipment.

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

The cost of vandalism to the Cook County suburban schools has fallen sharply during the last five years. The lower figures on the 1978-79 report are particularly significant during this inflationary period.

Vandalism costs to all 143 districts for an eight month period in 1973-74 was $1,340,822. This figure represents $586,951 for vandalism occurring inside school buildings and $548,601 for vandalism occurring outside school buildings, as well as $202,089 for fires, explosions, and other hazards. The cost per pupil was $2.90.

The cost of vandalism to the 103 reporting Cook County suburban school districts, from July 1, 1978 to June 30, 1979, was $604,167. This figure includes $219,054 for vandalism occurring inside school buildings and $294,266 for vandalism occurring outside the school buildings, as well as $90,887 for fires. The cost per pupil was $2.03.

In 1978-79, sixty percent of vandalism occurred during school hours, and forty percent after school hours. Five percent of the vandals were apprehended. The following means of control were applied: restitution by student and/or parent; student suspension; parent and/or student counseling; police and/or courts involvement.

The Mt. Prospect school district reported they have an extensive prevention program (e.g. educational, commercial, industrial, institutional, organizational). Argo community district and Thornton Township district report glass cover box installations over their alarm levers significantly reduced the number of false alarms.

Fifteen elementary/junior high school districts and five high school districts reported on their successful vandalism prevention programs. These districts and their programs are summarized below:

1. Adoption of specific philosophy of education

    a. Child-centered

        (1) District #39

            (a) help children feel good about themselves and the school-in addition to stressing academics

    b. Involvement

        (1) District #37

            (a) create a greater concern and realization of responsibility for proper care of public property

            (b) Code of Behavior - developed jointly by parents, community members, school personnel, and students

            (c) encourage students to assume positive leadership roles

    c. Pride

        (1) District #172

            (a) students are proud of what they have, and strive to keep it that way

2. Installation of alarm system

    Districts #99, #103, #109, #130, #200, and #210

3. Tightening of security

    District #126 - police patrol

    District #152½ - security patrol

    District #200 - police radios and school security during school hours

    District #202 - special patrol units scheduled during crucial periods of school calendar

    District #203 - supervision - a daily log of vandalism maintained

4. Repair/replacement of damaged equipment/property as soon as possible

   District #90 and #130

5. Discontinuation of outside night lighting has proven effective in some areas

   District #140 and #150

   District #151 - Darkness discourages congregating around doors. Discontinuation of outside night lighting has cut window breakage extensively.

6. Establishment of special fund

   District #211 - The Board of Education appropriates a fund used for repair of damage caused by acts of vandalism during regular school hours or any school sponsored function. Money remaining in the student special fund as of May 15 is transferred to a Student Council Activities Fund.

7. Watch and report group

   District #140 - "one of our schools appeared to be a target for the bulk of vandalism forays. An interested citizens committee, together with the building principal, met with Village officials and a neighborhood 'Watch and report' group became an effective deterrent to vandalism."

8. Miscellaneous Programs

   District #202 - offenders required to pay for amount of damage incurred by school

   District #74 - parent and/or student pays

   District #200 - outside guard service, with use of key stations

   - eliminate use of some exterior doors as entrances

   - use of hand knobs in place of pull handles on exterior doors (reduces leverage)

District #37 - Officer Friendly

District #152½ - night shift for custodian

District #217 - on weekends, have two people in building at all times

District #203 - daily log of vandalism maintained

District #88 - staff and neighbors report <u>any</u> activity. Apprehension immediate

District #126 - No Trespassing signs posted

TABLE I

COST OF FIRE DAMAGE
SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1978-79

Area	Percent of School Dists. Reporting	Damage During School	Damage After School	Damage During School	Damage After School
Elementary/ Junior High					
North	47%	$ 50	+	0	$ 1,000
West	77	0	$ 7,643	0	0
South	80	0	8,195	0	20,423
Southwest	76	0	0	0	700
TOTALS	70%	$ 50	$15,838+	0	$22,123
High School					
North	58%	$1,167	$15,897	0	0
West	86	0	11,150	0	0
South	84	150	100	0	$22,162
Southwest	100	2,250	0	0	0
TOTALS	82%	$3.567	$27,147	0	$22,162+
GRAND TOTALS	72%	$3,617	$42,985	0	$44,285+= $90,887+

+Exact figure not available

TABLE II

COST OF VANDALISM
SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1979-80

Area	Percent of School Dists. Reporting	Damage During School	Damage After School	Damage During School	Damage After School
Elementary/ Junior High					
North	47%	$ 2,000	$13,678	$ 3,450	$128,610
West	77	6,180	2,026	230	15,364
South	80	634	18,861	5,971	36,632
Southwest	76	3,818	10,219	187+	27,808
TOTALS	70%	$12,632	$44,784	$ 9,838+	$208,414
High School					
North	58%	$57,405	$13,606	$ 3,131	$ 16,037
West	86	21,192	1,800	150	9,000
South	84	9,197	18,980	4,160	29,646
Southwest	100	25,587+	13,871+	2,500	11,350
TOTALS	82%	$113,381+	$48,257+	$ 9,941	$ 66,033
GRAND TOTALS	72%	$126,013+	$93,041+	$19,779+	$274,447± $513,280+

+Exact figure not available

TABLE III

VANDALISM/FIRE COST PER PUPIL
SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
BY AREA - 1978-79

AREA	TOTAL COST OF VANDALISM/FIRE	ENROLLMENT	COST PER PUPIL
ELEMENTARY/ JUNIOR HIGH			
NORTH	$148,788	42,500	$3.50
WEST	31,443	36,926	.85
SOUTH	90,716	46,118	1.97
SOUYHWEST	42,732	34,931	1.22
AVERAGE	$ 78,420	40,119	$1.89
HIGH SCHOOL			
NORTH	$107,243	40,505	$2.65
WEST	43,292	22,135	1.96
SOUTH	84,395	28,405	2.97
SOUTHWEST	55,758	23,082	2.42
AVERAGE	$ 72,672	28,532	$2.50